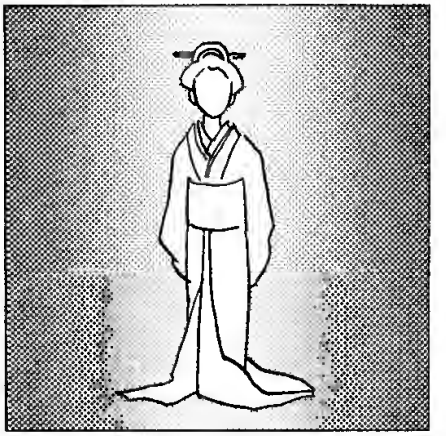
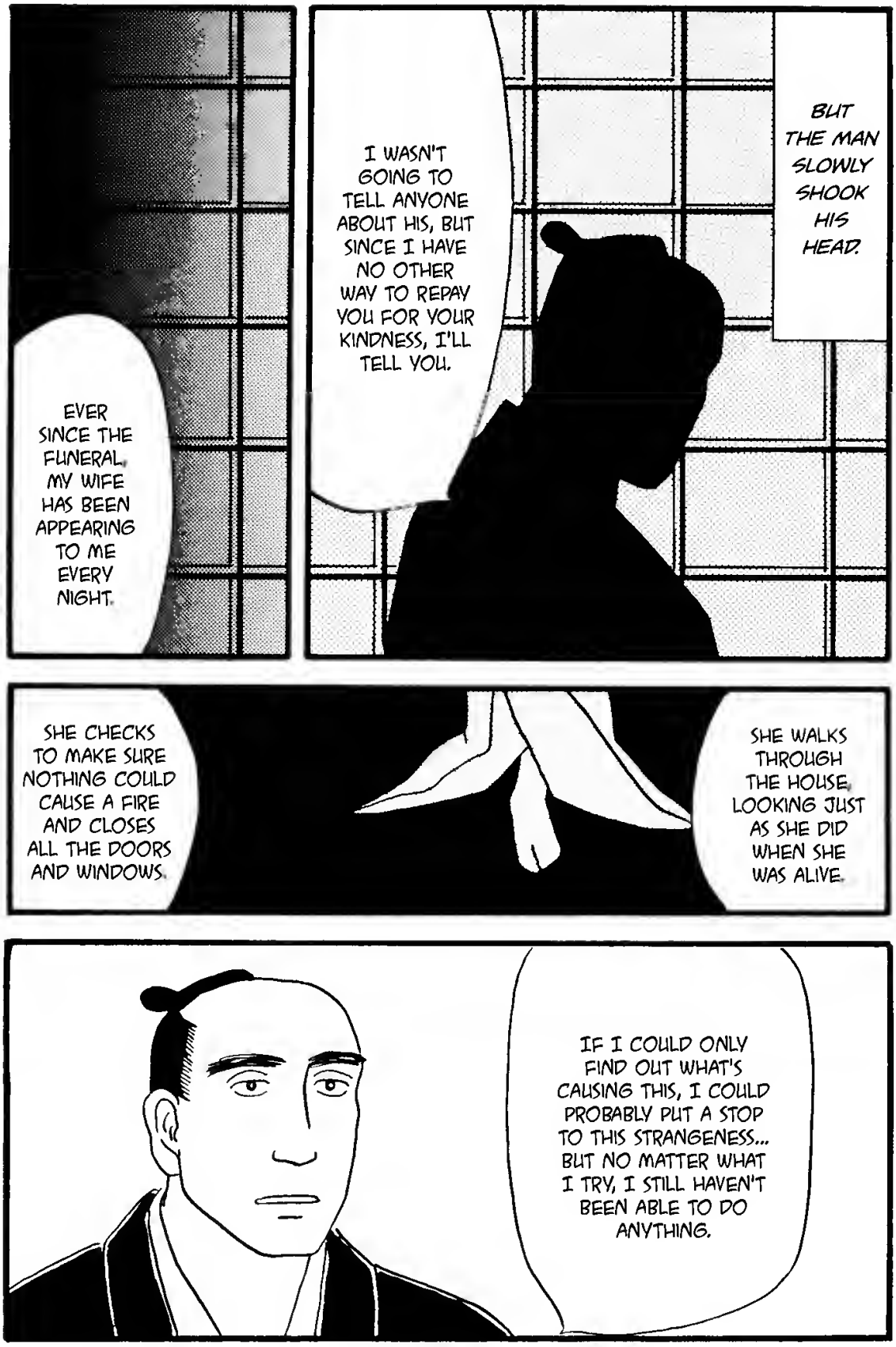
Tale 18

The Shape of His Dead Wife

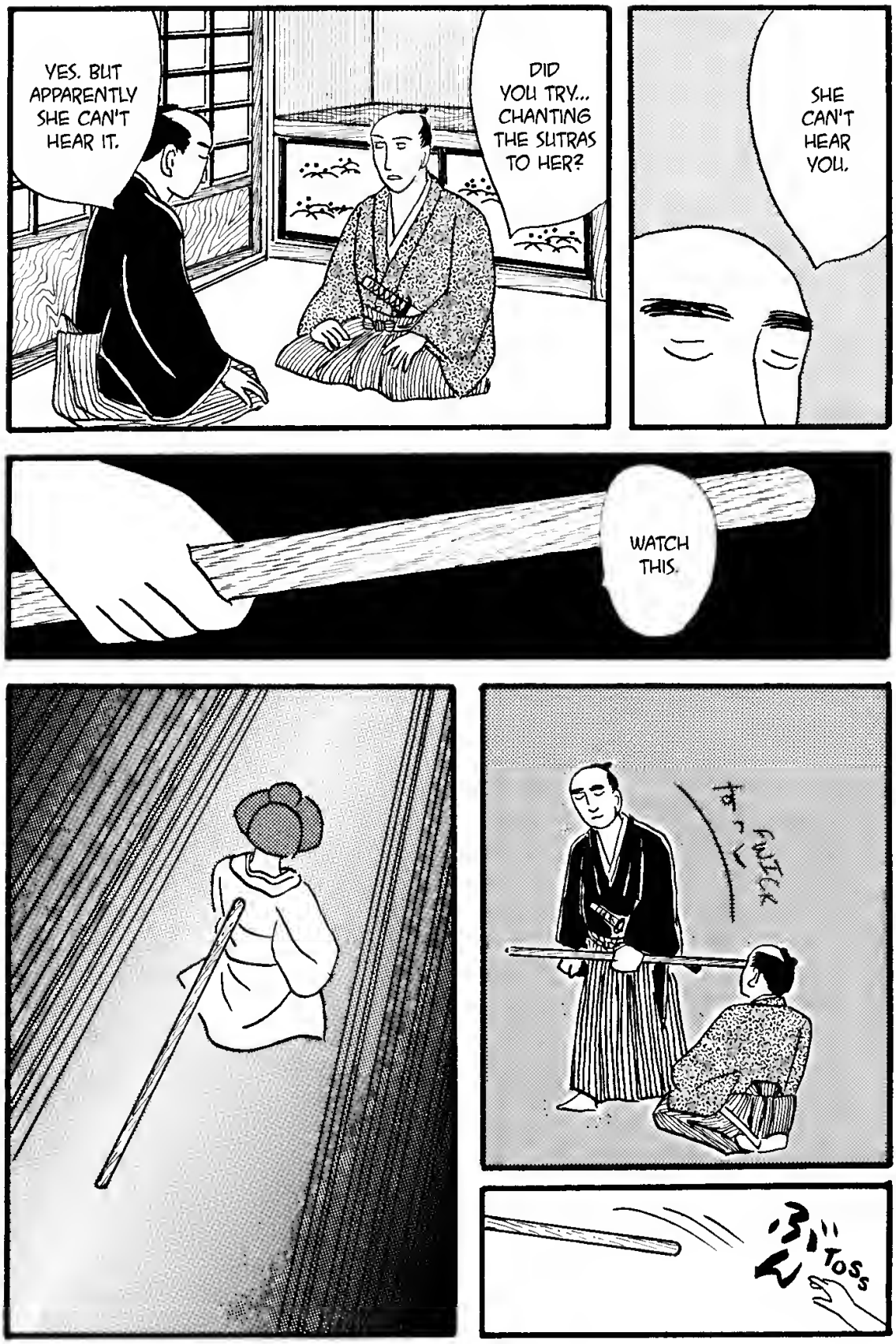


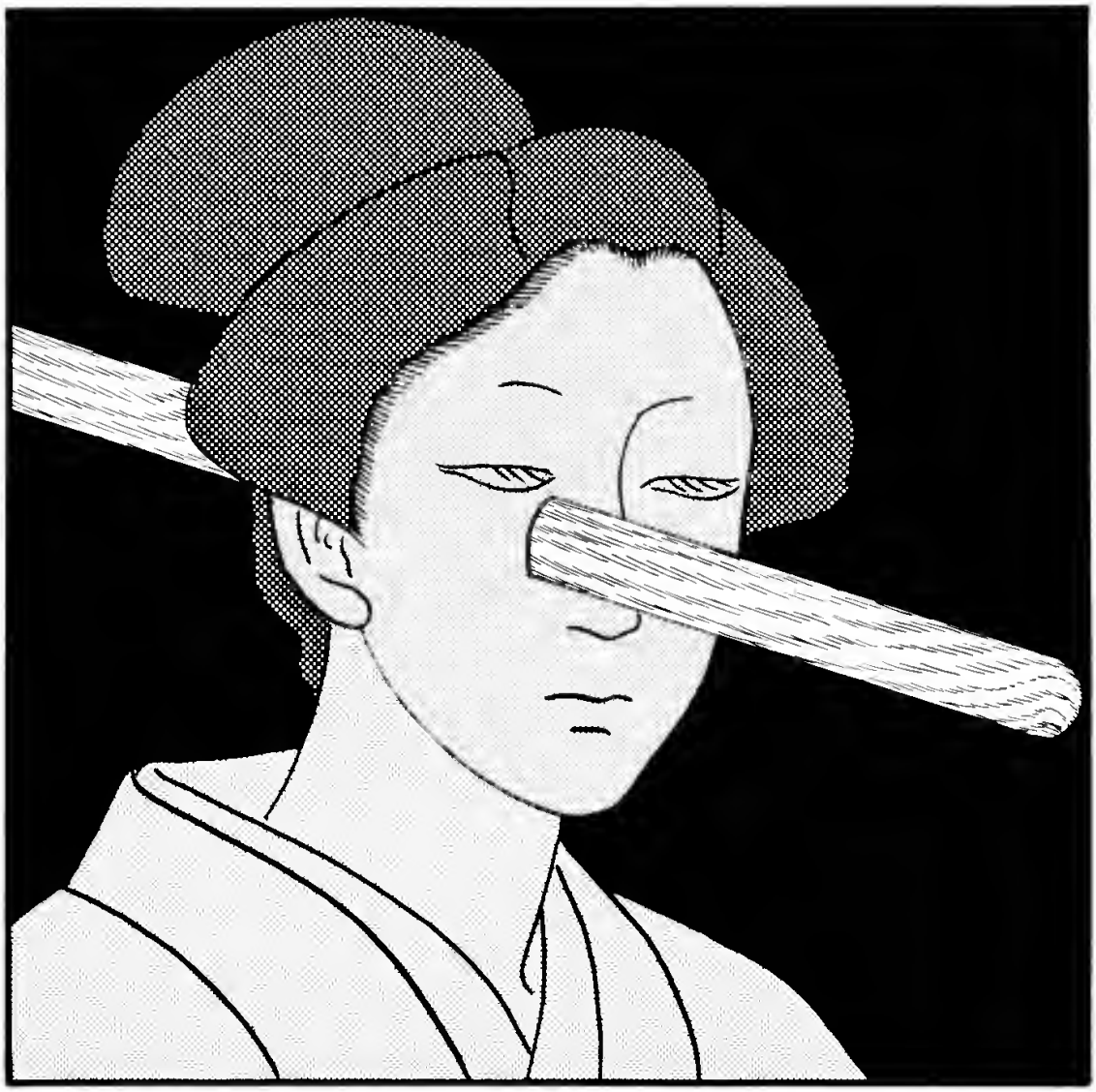
ONCE, THERE WAS A SAMURAI NAMED FUJISAWA FROM OKACHI WHO HAD RECENTLY LOST HIS WIFE. LONG AFTER FINISHING THE FUNERAL SERVICE, EVEN THOUGH MANY DAYS HAD ALREADY PASSED, HE REMAINED SHUT-UP IN HIS HOUSE AND WOULD NOT COME OUT.
A WORRIED FRIEND WHO CAME TO VISIT SAW THAT FUJISAWA'S FACE LOOKED PALE, AND HIS BODY SEEMED FRAIL.

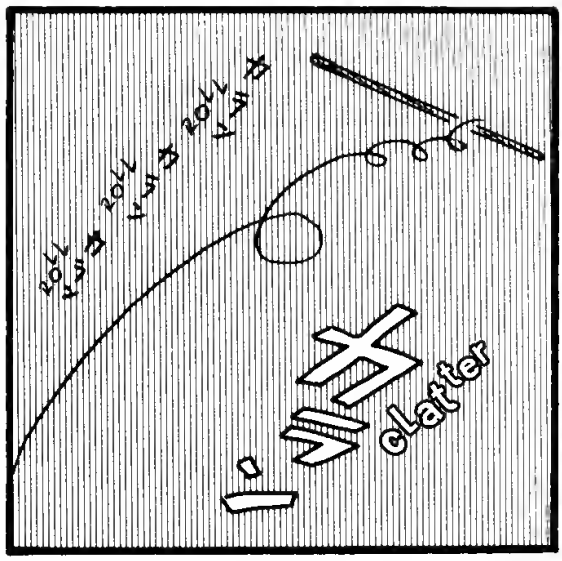
YOU'RE STILL YOUNG. THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT KIND OF WONDERFUL WOMAN YOU MAY MEET IN THE FUTURE.
NO, I GIVE YOU MY WORD. IT'S BOUND TO HAPPEN, SO YOU MUST KEEP YOUR HEART STRONG.


EVER SINCE THE FUNERAL, MY WIFE HAS BEEN APPEARING TO ME EVERY NIGHT.
I WASN'T GOING TO TELL ANYONE ABOUT HIS, BUT SINCE I HAVE NO OTHER WAY TO REPAY YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS, I'LL TELL YOU.
BUT THE MAN SLOWLY SHOOK HIS HEAD.
SHE CHECKS TO MAKE SURE NOTHING COULD CAUSE A FIRE AND CLOSES ALL THE DOORS AND WINDOWS.
SHE WALKS THROUGH THE HOUSE, LOOKING JUST AS SHE DID WHEN SHE WAS ALIVE.
IF I COULD ONLY FIND OUT WHAT'S CAUSING THIS, I COULD PROBABLY PUT A STOP TO THIS STRANGENESS... BUT NO MATTER WHAT I TRY, I STILL HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO DO ANYTHING.

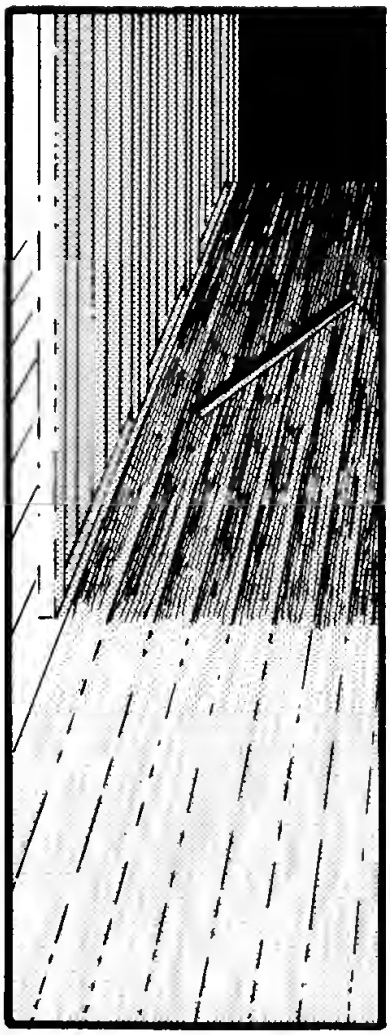
OKAY. LET ME SPEND THE NIGHT, AND WE'LL GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS.
LADY OTSUGI! LADY OTSUGI!

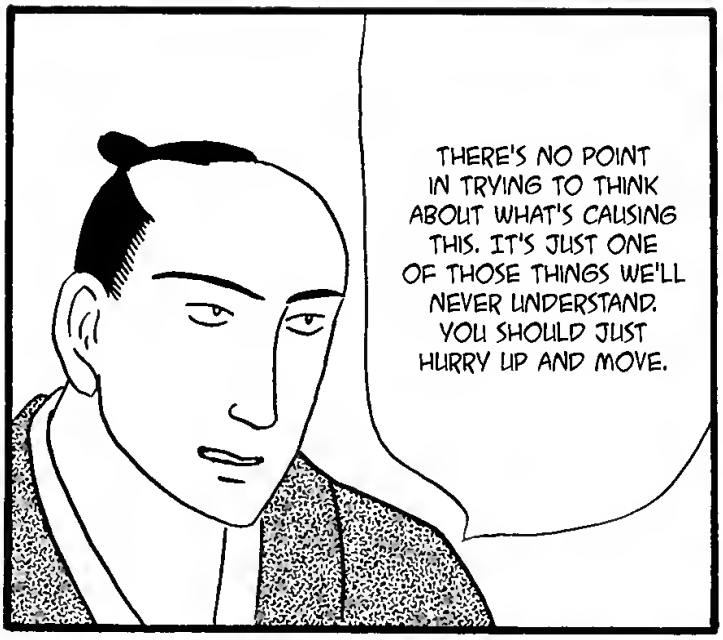

DID YOU TRY... CHANTING THE SUTRAS TO HER?
YES. BUT APPARENTLY SHE CAN'T HEAR IT.
SHE CAN'T HEAR YOU.
WATCH THIS.
FWICK
TOSS

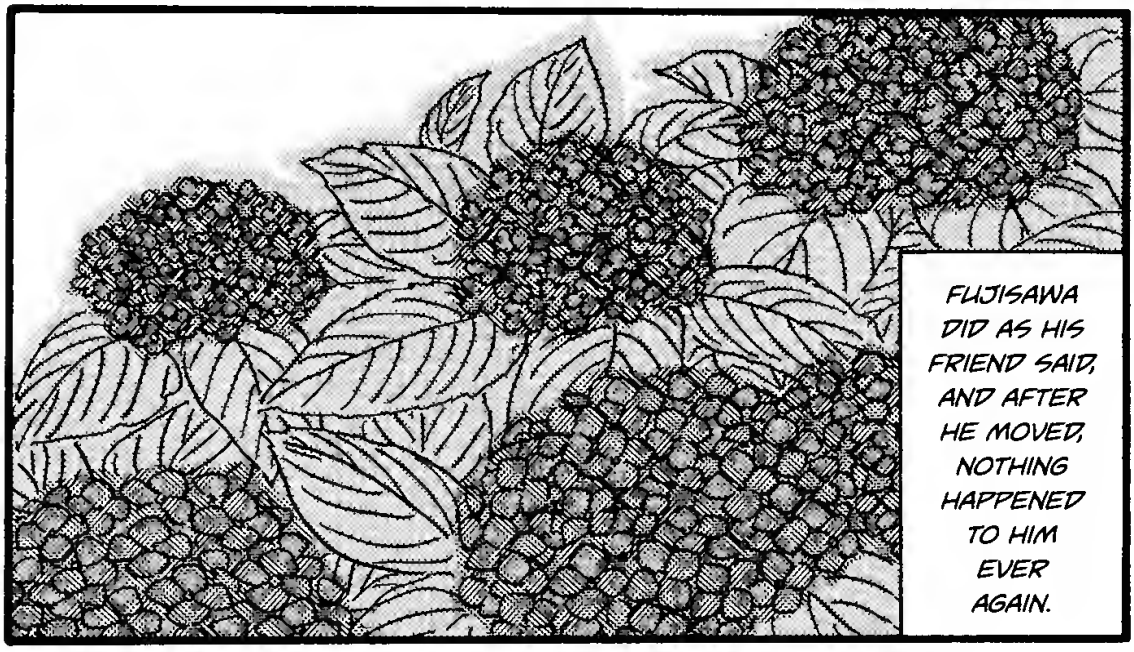


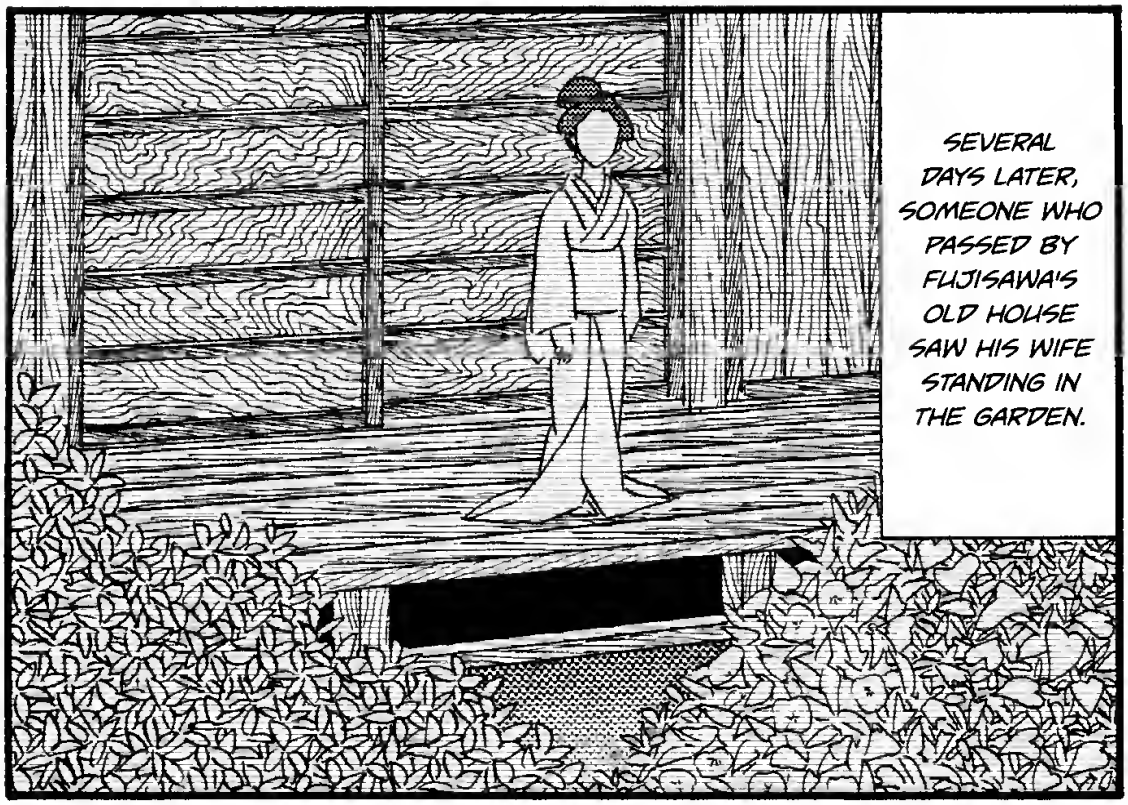

later

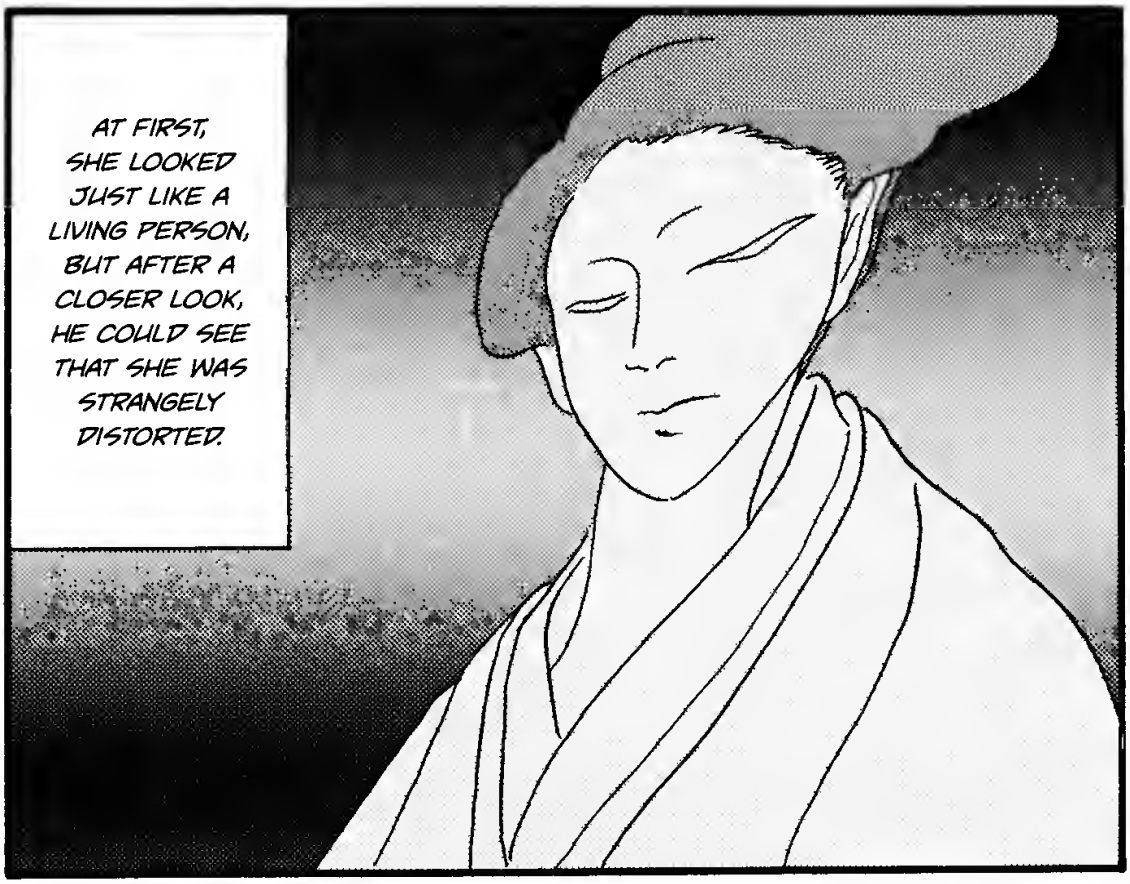
I DUNNO.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?




THERE'S NO POINT IN TRYING TO THINK ABOUT WHAT'S CAUSING THIS. IT'S JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS WE'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND. YOU SHOULD JUST HURRY UP AND MOVE.


FUJISAWA DID AS HIS FRIEND SAID, AND AFTER HE MOVED, NOTHING HAPPENED TO HIM EVER AGAIN.


SEVERAL DAYS LATER, SOMEONE WHO PASSED BY FUJISAWA'S OLD HOUSE SAW HIS WIFE STANDING IN THE GARDEN.


AT FIRST, SHE LOOKED JUST LIKE A LIVING PERSON, BUT AFTER A CLOSER LOOK, HE COULD SEE THAT SHE WAS STRANGELY DISTORTED.